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SUBJECT: SOUTH AFRICA POLITICAL NEWSLETTER SEPTEMBER 6-SEPTEMBER 11

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¶1. (SBU) This was written in partnership with the Open Source Center's Pretoria Bureau. The newsletter is open to contributions from officers in the Embassy or in the Consulates who wish to highlight political trends. Contact Madeline Seidenstricker or Jonathan Smallridge for more information, or to make contributions. The newsletter also is available on the Political Section's blog, "A View from South Africa," found on intelink.gov.

Domestic News

MOD Sisulu Hints at Forum to Discuss Soldiers' Work Conditions

¶2. (U) SABC News reported on 8 September that Minister of Defence Lindiwe Sisulu says it may have been a mistake to allow the formation of a trade union in the South African National Defence Force, and that there is a serious lack of discipline among soldiers, referring to the recent protest action by soldiers at the Union Buildings in Pretoria. Sisulu said it may be necessary to create a forum where the conditions of service of members could be addressed, "where the defence force has its own version of the public service commission, where we have a military commission to deal with the salaries of the defence force, and allow a mode of engagement with the defence force, which does not result in this kind of unionisation which has been allowed for the past few years."

She reiterated that government would not reconsider the dismissal of 1,300 soldiers who took part in the protest action. [Online news service of the South African Broadcasting Corporation; nominally independent but partially funded by government; <http://www.sabcnews.com>]

Congress of the People (COPE) to Cooperate with Other Opposition Parties

¶3. (U) The Congress of the People (COPE) is moving ahead with plans of establishing a cooperation agreement with opposition parties. COPE communications head Phillip Dexter told reporters that his party had no major differences with other opposition parties and is willing to work with them. He emphasized that the coalition was for winning political power in the 2011 elections and not an anti-ANC society. Last month, political parties met to work out a strategic approach to re-aligning opposition parties in the country. (Sowetan, September, 08, 2009)

Manuel's "New Deal"

¶4. (U) The National Planning Commission released a green paper on strategic national plan. Minister in the Presidency Trevor Manuel, who released the report on September 4, set out a vision that helps the country's long-term planning priorities. The paper is to guide decisions and policy choices beyond the five year political terms. Until now, government has focused only on five-year plans linked to

the mandate given by voters during general elections and election promises, but has never pursued long-term planning. The document will also guide Minister for Performance Monitoring and Evaluation Collins Chabane to ensure that decisions are implemented and can be measured against clear long-term goals. The documents will be tabled in the National Assembly on September 08. The National Planning Commission is encouraging a national discussion on the green paper. (The Star, September, 04, 2009)

African National Congress (ANC) Not "Recalling, But Restructuring"

15. (U) African National Congress (ANC) Secretary General Gwede Mantashe told students at the Tshwane University of Technology that the ANC is not recalling leaders but restructuring regional positions. The ANC Youth league in Northwest Province in early Qpositions. The ANC Youth league in Northwest Province in early September recalled Chief Whip Bassie Moepeng. In Tshwane, the youth league also called for executive mayor to resign. Mantashe reported that chief whips and mayors are not being recalled, but "regions are restructuring" for the 2011 local elections. He also told the audience that the ANC is aware of infighting in the regions and has made a clear distinction between protests related to service delivery and those caused by infighting from people positioning themselves for the 2011 local government. (September, 09, 2009)

AZAPO Destroys for Biko

16. (U) The Azanian Youth Organisation (AZAYO) a youth wing of the Azanian People's Organisation (AZAPO), plans to commemorate the anniversary of Steven Biko's death by destroying Steve Biko memorial sites. The Garden of Remembrance in Ginsberg and the Steve Biko statue in East London have been selected as targets. Siyabonga Kave, a member of AZAYO, says they took the decision to destroy these memorials when they recognized that the people who erected them do not follow any of Biko's principles. The threats by AZAYO cannot be taken lightly as during the April election AZAPO disturbed

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a live SABC broadcast in Port Elizabeth, claiming that they were not given enough airtime for the election campaign. (Sunday Times, September, 06, 2009)

Children's Act to be Reviewed

17. (U) Children rights groups have forwarded a petition to the Ministry of Women, Youth, Children and People with Disabilities, calling for a revision of the Children's Act. The groups want the act to include more decisive action against perpetrators. The Children's Act was passed four years ago, but according to Sushila Dhever from the Legal Resources Centre, the act still looks good on paper. According to recent statistics one in four children are sexually abused a year and one in nine are reported. (SABCNews, September, 08, 2009)

International News

Motlanthe Defends Call to Lift Zimbabwe Sanctions

18. (U) Replying to questions in Parliament on September 9, Deputy President Kgalema Motlanthe defended SADC calls to lift sanctions on Zimbabwe, highlighting that the Global Peace Agreement says "that all forms of measures and sanctions against Zimbabwe be lifted in order to facilitate a sustainable solution to the challenges that are currently facing Zimbabwe" and that the parties "commit themselves to working together in re-engaging the international community with the view to bringing an end to the country's international isolation". Motlanthe stated that the South African government together with SADC and the AU supports the implementation of the GPA and the lifting of sanctions. (The Presidency, September 9)

Ebrahim Ebrahim receives credentials from new NEPAD CEO

19. (U) International Relations and Cooperation (DICO) Deputy

Minister Ebrahim Ebrahim on September 7, 2009, received credentials from New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD) Secretariat Chief Executive Officer (CEO), Dr Ibrahim Assane Mayaki, at the Union Buildings in Pretoria. (DICO Briefing, September 7)

Zuma to lead delegation to the 64th session of the UNGA

¶10. (U) President Jacob Zuma will lead the South African delegation to the 64th session of the United Nations General Assembly scheduled to take place from September 21-25. The remainder of his delegation will be announced soon. (DICO Briefing, September 9)

Zuma To Host Swedish Prime Minister

¶11. (U) Zuma will on September 10 host Swedish Prime Minister Fredrik Reinfeldt for bilateral political, economic and trade discussions in Cape Town. Zuma will be supported by the DICO Minister Maite Nkoana-Mashabane and will host Reinfeldt within the context of South Africa's efforts to consolidate relations with Sweden with a view to strengthening the North-South dialogue in support of the African Agenda. (The Presidency, September 8)

Motlanthe Speaks Plainly About Gadhafi

¶12. (U) Motlanthe spoke plainly about Gadhafi's ambitions to turn Africa into a single state and "be crowned the king of kings in Africa." The Deputy President said, "He entertains such grandiose airs because the fact is that, in the main, he has been very generous. That's why, when poorer nations run out of funds, he can simply close the tap if they do not vote for him." (The Times, September 9)